

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 150940Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3689

INFO COMUSSAG NKP THAILAND IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

COMIPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 2937

EXDIS - MILITARY COMMANDS HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO USDAO SAIGON FROM CAN THO
14 MAR 75 REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAN THO 0094

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI MOPS VS

SUBJECT: MILITARY SITUATION AROUND CAN THO CITY

REF: FVA 5318

1. NVA UNITS WHICH RECENTLY MOVED INTO PHONG DINH PROVINCE (REFTTEL) REMAIN WELL AWAY FROM CAN THO. NVA 18B REGIMENT CURRENTLY CONCENTRATED AROUND THOI LAI (V) CENTER, THUAN TRUNG (D) (OVER 20 KILOMETERS), FROM CAN THO WHILE 95A REGIMENT IN PHUNG HIEP (D) SW OF HIGHWAY 4 (15 KM'S). FROM CAN THO TAY DO 2 AND 3 BATTALIONS ARE LOCATED BETWEEN THE TWO NVA REGIMENTS, AND TAY DO 1 BATTALION IS APPROX 6 KM WEST OF PHUNG HIEP DISTRICT TOWN. D-1 REGIMENT NOW REPORTEDLY LOCATED IN CAU KE (D), VINH BINH (P). D-1 EXCEPT FOR 309 BATTALION IN THUAN HOA (D), BAX XUYEN (P) CURRENT APPEARS UNLIKELY TO BECOME INVOLVED IN PHONG DINH.

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2. 21ST ARVN DIVISION NOW ENTIRELY IN PHONG DINH PROVINCE

AND CONTIGUOUS AREA OF CHUONG THIEN PROVINCE. DIVISION FORWARD CP NOW LOCATED AT CAI RANG SOME 6 KM'S SOUTH OF CAN THO; 31ST REGIMENT IN VICINITY OF BA XUYEN/PHONG DINH/CHUONG THIEN BORDER; 33RD REGIMENT ALONG ROUTE 31 IN TAN BINH (V), THUAN NHON (D); AND 32ND REGIMENT APPROX 10 KM SE OF THOI LAI VILLAGE HQ. ONE CHAU DOC RF BATTALION HAS ALSO BEEN POSITIONED IN NORTHERN PART OF PROVINCE.

3. ACTIVITY SO FAR REPORTED BY MR4 LIMITED TO NVA PROBING ATTACKS AGAINST RF POSITIONS, WITH HEAVIEST ATTACKS IN AREA OF 18B REGIMENT. TWO RF BATTALIONS REPORTEDLY LOST CONTACT DURING NIGHT OF MARCH 13/14, BUT NO REPORT YET ON CASUALTIES. THERE WERE 7 AIRSTRIKES IN PHONG DINH DURING DALIGHT HOURS MARCH 13 WITH NO REPORT ON RESULTS; 21ST DIVISION HAS REPORTED NO CONTACTS IN PAST 24 HOURS.

4. COMMENT: ARVN TROOPS HAVE BEEN MOVED INTO PROVINCE QUICKLY AND WERE STILL CHANGING POSITIONS AT LEAST AS LATE AS NIGHT OF MARCH 13/14. MR4 IS WITHHOLDING INFORMATION ON 21ST DIVISION MOVEMENTS, IN SOME CASES EVEN FROM PHONG DINH SECTOR. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT 21ST DIVISION UNITS HAVE MADE SOME CONTACTS NOT YET REPORTED. IN ANY CASE, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF NVA/VC TROOPS HAVING MOVED ANY CLOSER TO CAN THO OR OF THEIR ATTEMPTING TO DO SO. ELEMENT OF SURPRISE IS DEFINITELY GONE, AND MASSIVE ARVN BUILDUP IN AREA APPEARS TO PRECLUDE ANY SERIOUS THREAT TO CAN THO OR MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN AREA, THOUGH ISOLATED ROCKETING OR SAPPER/ TERRORIST INCIDENTS POSSIBLE. SHOULD NVA MAIN FORCE ATTEMPT LARGE SCALE ATTACK UNDER THESE UNPROPITIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES, ARVN ARTILLERY AND VNAF SHOULD ENJOY GOOD TURKEY SHOOT. MCNAMARA UNQUOTE
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